6:Beeley K-5 (1957-1958) 1959 EZ6 Malta EZ6

be suffering from economic near-strangulation because the working of his farm-unit is linked with a fluctuating but permanent element of debt. This is because the factors mentioned above as producing the need and demand for money are operating, but the farmer and his farm-unit are unable to hold their own in the present agricultural economy of Malta; this in spite of the artificial boosts of Government loans, guaranteed prices, free gifts, agricultural development schemes, information services, etc.,(Section 2).

178 There is a range therefore between the farmer who is
434 proving able to advance financially and he who is not, even to the state of impoverishment. The problem of the latter may be considered from two view-points, the economic and the social. Economically, the difficulty is clear. Many farm units as they exist today cannot hope to provide an income, after expenses have been met, which will support the family and allow of expansion or even maintainance of the unit. The social problem is less easy to define. It would appear that many characteristics of the traditional peasant farming system of subsistence and independence of each farm unit still remain beneath an often thin veneer of [212] commercialization and modernization. This is related in large part to the lack of education of the farmer himself. The farmer of today in Malta is an old man and ageing who has been but little affected by the developments in education, in its widestsense, which are turning the ambitions of the present younger generation of the farming community towards the towns and towards non-agricultural pursuits. At heart, the present Maltese farmer is still in very many cases thinking as a peasant, isolated and independent, in a farming system now essentially commercial, competitive yet inter-dependent. Financial profits and losses now rule his life but the farmer is, in a disturbingly large number of cases, partly unable and partly unwilling to adapt himself and his farm to the new conditions.

178 Something of the effect of the both the economic and
234 social aspects of the problem may be gathered from a study
434 of a number of sample cases:

426 (a) A goats' milk producer, living just within the boundary of the Urban area of Malta (Case V), operated during 1957 with a persistent debt on the maintainance of his animals, the basis of his livelihood. During the year, the milk production of his herd varied between 70 and 30 lbs per day. This was sold for the official guaranteed prices and to this extent may be seen as a constant element. Produce from the tomna of land held by the [451] farmer was used in the home but made only a minor contribution to the food budget. This man keeps no accounts of the costs of maintainance of his herd and profits therefrom. He is operating in a perpetual state of debt. A table of

178 his income from milk sold and expenses on fodder during
234 nine months of 1957 (Case V, Summary) illustrates the
434 progress of this debt. He looks back nostalgically to
426 the days when his father sold milk from door to door in
[654] the Urban area and complains bitterly of his present poverty. Incongruously, however, he insists that he fully realizes that without the present Government guarantee (through the M.M.U.) he could not operate at all. He probably does realize this.

(b) Another case of operation within permanent debt is provided by two cows-milk producers who work together as a unit (Case IX) with three dozen head of cattle and a total area held of about 100 tmien used primarily for the production of fodder for the herd. They claim that the debt factor makes it impossible for them to organize their farm and herd as they would wish. For example, while they fully realize the profit to be gained by rearing calves and selling fully grown animals, they are in fact forced to sell even female calves (which they would otherwise keep) in order to pay instalments towards the cost of cows or to pay off part of the debt outstanding to the fodder merchants. This debt position makes them reluctant to take on any further loan commitments; nevertheless the Government loan offers at only 1% are definitely attractive, as a means whereby they would be able to increase the number in their herd and also mechanize their field-work without making their debt
178 position appreciably worse. Behind all this it is clear
234 that they are basing all their hopes on the guaranteed milk
434 price offered by the M.M.U. and they are therefore intent
654 on accumulating animals and thereby supplying the M.M.U with as much milk as possible.

They have no thought or care as to what might happen were the official guaranteed price to go, along with the subsidy which supports it. In fact they have singularly little appreciation of the total picture of which they form part and will be content to grumble quietly and
[212] ignorantly as long as the present artificial situation brings them a steady income. They are both illiterate (Case IX).

(c) An illiterate farmer and herdsman (Case VI)
178 keeps no accounts of the finances of his farm working.
434 The money of the household is "kept in one purse" from
454 which all expenses, farm maintainance and improvement,
234 household expenses and all 'extra' items such as the
654 provision of dowries and wedding costs, etc., are met.
[451] This farmer admits to having been able to save more than £1000 as a result of the 1939-45 War but observes that today they "have a hard job to earn the daily bread". He claims that the savings had all gone by 1958 - partly on improvements to the house but mostly on the purchase of cows as part of his grand design to join the hundreds of other farmers in Malta and Gozo striving to ride on the crest of the wave of the M.M.U. guaranteed price for all milk produced. It is held that this pattern is typical of Maltese farming, and particularly dairying, today. The main energies of the farmer are devoted to making as large a profit as he can while the artificially-supported market for milk is maintained.

178 (d) A literate part-time farmer (Case XIII) keeps
434 accounts of the working of his farm. His second employ-
241 ment brings him in over £5 per week for all but a few
[511] weeks of the year and at the expense of only a small amount of his time and effort. In a normal year he reckons to make an income of about £450 of which about a third goes in costs of seeds, transport and manure, etc. and a further £50 in hiring labour. On account of the steady income from his other job farming has something of the quality of a hobby, a pursuit to be followed

178 434 241 because he has always been used to doing it and one which enables him to provide many of the food items needed by the family. Moreover he feels that his sons, who emigrated some years ago, will eventually wish to return to Malta and will be still enough attracted to the way of life which bred them to want to cultivate a small piece of land themselves during their retirement.

For this man, therefore, farming lacks the character of the bitter struggle with debt which it has for (a). To this extent he is typical of the large and growing number of part-time farmers in Malta today whose livelihood is provided by their non-agricultural job but who maintain a sort of residual interest in the land both as the source of 'extras' and as a link with the farming community from which they are but one generation, or less, removed.

156 241 426 The link with the land, mentioned under (d), gives both the full- and the part-time farmer a sense of independence to which he clings despite the inadequacies of farming from the economic point of view. This sense of independence is revealed in cases where the farmer is not prepared to consider taking a loan, even from the Government at only 1% interest, partly because, as he says, he is "not used to it", but rather perhaps because the variable fortunes of farming (crop failure, storm damage, market fluctuations, etc.) might make him unable to continue payment of the interest on the loan. He wants to be beholden to no-one. Even the house in which he lives was bought by him from his own savings without the help of loans (d).

THE FAMILY BUDGET

472 511 It appears that MONEY is a variable but important factor in the operation of the modern Maltese farm as an economic or uneconomic unit. Money within the household, as distinct from the farm, merits further consideration.

As already suggested, there is generally no clear distinction made by the farmer between the finances pertaining to his farm and those of his family and its maintainance. The most common practice is for there to be "one purse" (Cases VI and X). Into this go all profits from sale of produce or livestock and out of it come the costs of running farm and household. As seen, the farm unit itself is not run with a budget in most cases and there is rarely any attempt on the part of the farmer to cost-account the working of his farm as far as the labour of his family and himself is concerned (Case X). Similarly it is still the exception rather than the rule to find a herdsman who keeps cost accounts of his milk production. In many cases he knows he is making a loss, though of the details he has no notion. In carrying on his farming under these conditions he seems

[45]

262 369 In respect of diet an important distinction between town and country emerges. In the towns the diet is essentially 'Italian' with the full complement of spaghetti and other pasta dishes while 'English' food is now also readily available; but in the country districts there is notably less pasta and its place is taken by potatoes and other vegetables. The townsman who has in any case to buy all his food has accepted Italian ideas on diet with certain local, Maltese modifications, but the countryman, still able to produce much of his own food, clings to vegetables for the bulk constituents of his diet. Bread is however a staple of both town and country (v. Section 2).

272 273 262 511 A range of soft drinks, commercial wines, spirits (whiskey is very popular throughout Maltese society) are now standard elements in the diet, while luxury foods such as chocolate, biscuits and the wide range of sweet cakes ('qaq') are further examples of items which have now established themselves as needs and, consequently, as demands on the family purse.

178 291 Nowadays clothes (or at least the materials from which they are made) are bought by the housewife. This in itself has produced a minor revolution in rural economy. Traditionally the simple garments of cotton cloth were made at home or at least within the village and were worn by the field worker until they could be worn no more. Today a new range of clothing demands have appeared. The farmer now wants better clothes and footwear, but the greatest change is among the younger farming generation who want to dress like the youths of the towns. The retail sale of clothing in the rural districts has expanded rapidly, especially since the 1939-45 War years brought in the widespread use of military surplus material.

423 362 511 Housing is important in the present consideration because money is now being spent by the farmer both on buying his own house where he can but also on developing it and improving the furnishings.

[178] Having seen the comparatively well-appointed town dwellings he is not content with his poor country cottage.

178 511 There is also a wide range of incidental luxury or semi-luxury items which are being added to the list of 'needs'. Thus costs of travelling, entertainment and recreation all require money. Payments to the Church have now largely replaced the one-time gifts in kind, and taxes, paid by a few members of the farming community, can clearly only be met with cash.

●451 511 [123] The first difficulty in investigating BUDGETS is the typical reticence to talk on matters financial. The second and more important draw-back is the aforementioned

457 511 lack of distinction between the money spent on the farm and that spent on the household.

In Case X there is an exceptional degree of trust and [593] co-operation between husband and wife. Unlike the average Maltese farmer, the husband in this Case (literate and English-speaking) keeps some check on income and expenditure in the form of receipts and documents relating to the Pitkal and other transactions. He observes that his keeping such vouchers was regarded as "a waste of time" by his contemporaries until an instance arose where they proved of major importance and benefit.

At the end of 1957 he talked vaguely of a bank balance [454] of £1,000. By April of the following year this had fallen to "£600" on account of certain heavy expenses (v. Case X). The period in question was financially atypical for this man because he was at the time rapidly expanding his herd of pigs, and he also suffered very badly from the severe storms of October, 1957.

The preparation of any kind of account for him or for any farmer like him is further complicated by the uncommercial approach which is made to the labour of the farmer himself(and in this Case that of a brother and nephew who normally work with him). Tasks are performed because custom demands that they are done and a job is not neglected because the return on it is insufficient. Thus [511] the labour of the farmer and his relatives does not figure as a cost in production (Section 2).

His income derives largely from the sale of fruit 434 (figs, apples, plums, pomegranates, etc.) but is variable. 454 In 1953 the two brothers shared £620 but in the 1956-57 458 season a larger amount of actual produce fetched only £340 to be shared between the two men. The nephew "receives something when a crop is sold". Other items sold in 1956-57 were grapes (£32) and smaller sales of tomatoes, sulla and potatoes. Thus in the 1956-57 season each of the brothers received a gross profit of about £250 on produce sold. This takes no account of food consumed directly by the family (for details v. Case X) nor of the virtual income in a poor year such as 1956-57 from savings. This feature is crucial. Given the normal conditions of peace, with no distortions as a result of war and siege, it becomes clear that the Maltese farmer is, in the great majority of cases, attempting to gain on the swings of the good year the saveable profit which he expects to lose on the roundabouts of a bad year not far [181] hence. This insecurity of his capital is important in his reluctance to lay out money on new methods of production or farm management and in part also echoes the conservation and inertia of the traditional peasant.

available", and normally delegates most of the work to a labourer who receives 24/- for an occasional day's work.

His own fields produce only a small part of the fodder required by the herd however and Wistin buys in sulla and other fodder "as it is needed". He does not buy regularly nor does he keep any record of his purchases or sales. In December, 1957, he was spending about 15/- per day on fodder other than sulla, on which he had spent £120 during the previous year, 1956. But of costs of production of milk he has little idea. His own labour does not figure as a 'cost'.

Wistin's family of eleven spends about £1 on food per day and eats potatoes and other vegetables and milk from the home farm to the value of a further 7/6d daily. The new demands on money are observed by both Wistin and his wife. She says that in her youth she "would never have dreamt of spending on clothes the money which her daughters are now spending". "In the old days, a girl went to the sea with her parents or on an occasional visit to Sant Anton - now they go to the cinema or to Valletta to buy shoes for the festa". One of the daughters is shortly to be married to a policeman and Wistin observes that the costs of the wedding and the dowry will be very considerable.

Wistin is a true herdsman. He has no interests which would upset his heavy routine of work. He is "not interested in festas" and his only relaxation is an occasional visit to the races at Marsa when his children are on holiday from school and able to take the goats out to graze.

His father was a labourer with the Services and had only a few fields, but Wistin began working for other herdsmen and then gradually built up his own herd to its present size, particularly in the past few years when, in common with many other Maltese and Gozitan herdsmen, he has ridden on the crest of the guaranteed-price wave. None of his children, however, shows any interest in goats and it is clear that both Wistin's wife and his brother-in-law (who has a half-share in the house occupied by Wistin and his family) are actively discouraging the children from planning to follow their father. Their main objection to herding appears to be the long hours and hard work entailed. Wistin is more than a little sad that the herd and farm which he has built up is likely to be broken up for lack of interest among his sons, for, as he says, "Once you leave the fields you never go back...."

CASE IV : Summary.

(A large-scale goats milk producer with some land.)

A. Land.

6 tmien in the Naxxar-Gharghur Hills region.

H. General.

159 433 This farmer is typical of many herdsmen. Without capital or land he derives from previous generations of peripatetic herdsmen who milked their goats on the 'rounds' of urban houses. Now forced to sell his milk to a centralised agency (the M.M.U.) for pasteurisation he is protected from price decline during the summer season of over-production but prevented from obtaining extra profits and perquisites (often of rather a dubious character). Without capital he has to rely on credit terms for fodder purchases and therefore pays merchant prices which are higher than those of other farmers. A garden plot and the stock supplies about half the family's food, without which increment the family economy could not operate. There is no possible future except on a low level for this type of production.

159 231 232 CASE VI : Gaetu (A milk producer with a considerable land holding.)

In May, 1957, Gaetu had 9 cows and about 50 goats. During the year he sold some thirteen goats for the abattoir and of the eight kids born in the year several died "because they didn't want to go on living". In November of the same year three of his cows had to be killed, two of them on account of 'paralysis of the feet' (probably related to lack of exercise and perpetual stall-feeding). The goats get scarcely more grazing than the cows, being limited to the small yards adjoining the main farm-building (v. Map 8).

The compulsory slaughter of the three ailing cows (for which he will be entitled to import replacements) has profoundly shaken Gaetu's faith in cows in general. He maintains that he "will put his efforts into goats for the loss of a goat means a loss of £10 against the £200 in the case of a cow."

159 234 [311] [246] [435] [464] Together with his adult son, Gaetu works 23 tmien of land, including some which is irrigable; and the emphasis in cropping is heavily on fodder production. But they still have to buy in a considerable amount of feed. For example in the 1956-57 winter Gaetu spent £175 on sulla, £99 for straw, and £15 on winter potatoes which were in glut. He feeds his animals according to yield which appears to mean that he gives more food and attention to the better yielding animals. "There is no profit in providing expensive fodder for poor-yielding animals." In fact, however, Gaetu has [451] very little appreciation of his profit. None of his labour or that of his son is counted as a cost and he keeps no detailed account of income and expenditure. He gets receipts from the M.M.U. but otherwise, being illiterate himself, feels "reluctant to ask anyone for a written [65] statement". Nevertheless he reckons to be able to put together some sort of balance sheet for the income-tax authorities each year.

* E. General.

159 472 451 (i) In some of its characteristics this type of syndicate is not typical of Maltese farming systems. The partnership seems to derive historically from a line of large farmers and is now held together by the drive and ability of one of their number.

*159 472 451 181 (ii) Nevertheless if one ignores the partnership organisation one may use this case-study as illustrating the practises and modes of thought of the most highly developed type of Maltese farmer.

- Characteristically there is a marked reluctance to give any financial information. Official records and returns are even less accurate than in the case of smaller-scale and more ignorant cultivators. Some records are certainly kept by the group but individual shares in gross income do not seem to be formally arranged. There does no stem even here to be either a monetary evaluation of their own labour or any assessment of net profit as distinct from gross income. Receipts appear to go into a central treasury which is drawn on by agreement over each specific case.
- Although there is present considerable financial acumen this is a matter of peasant shrewdness rather than any real commercial understanding.

*159 433 181 242 - Yields are good - tomatoes will average 15 qantar per tomna, grapes 10 qantar per tomna, but these are attained by the careful application of proverbial wisdom and not by the possession of better scientific understanding than their neighbours.

*159 181 232 242 - In spite of the fact that the syndicate's capital reserves and their practical abilities are considerable, the physical environment dominates their actions. They are not prepared to experiment themselves and they look askance at those who are. One has an unhappy feeling that as already noted, their very success with traditional methods inhibits their acceptance of new ones. Thus even with farmers such as these there is a great mental gulf between them and typical farmers of Northern Europe and between them and their advisers.

* 159 472 464 CASE IX : Antnin & Gakbu (A long-established partnership of two unrelated stock farmers now engaged in cows' milk production.)

Both these men are married and occupy houses in the same street. They have operated as a single farming unit during their whole working lives and it is not always clear whether even they can distinguish which property belongs to each. The teenage eldest sons of each man work full-time with their fathers whose wives occasionally assist with field-work.

* 159 178 234 Some few years ago the two friends had 36 goats. By 1958 only two remained and the emphasis had swung to cows' milk production. In 1956 they had about 18 cows; eighteen months later the joint herd had doubled in size. Their aim has been to build up as large a herd as possible as quickly as possible in order to benefit from the guaranteed price offered by the M.M.U. for milk produced. The two men insist that they are at the same time striving to build up a

*159 245 in a single picking and do not require the same attention to quality as those for the table.

*159 245 231 451 In this move towards more vine production and the recent interest in pigs Ômri is making a conscious effort to emphasize the profitable in place of the unprofitable. Income for Ômri means the receipts on produce sold. Unlike most farmers he keeps a record of this income in order to see "how business is progressing" and in order to enable him and his brother to effect a share-out of profits. As found generally Ômri takes no account of his own labour, or that of his brother or nephews, in his costing. Moreover the position is complicated by the fact that no clear distinction is made between money spent on the home and family, and money spent on field rents, costs of seed, manure, etc. It is all held "in one purse". [593] Ômri himself maintains that a more usual practice is for the farmer to give his wife a fixed amount for house-keeping but, in his own case, there is clearly a high degree of trust and co-operation between husband and wife.

*159 434 451 [511] At Easter, 1958, Ômri spoke of a balance of some £400, less than half his reserves of a year previously. The drop was due to a £200 outlay on pigs and pig-sties together with several smaller items (such as £50 for street surfacing, £30 for a sewing machine, £15 hospital expenses, £30 for annual field rents, etc.) and the cost of repairing the damage wrought by the exceptionally heavy storms of late 1957. During the year 1956-57 it is estimated that Ômri's income was about £350. £250 of this came from the sale of field produce as shown below, the rest is an estimate of income from pig sales and other items.

*159 434

Income:	From partnership land.	From Ômri's Land	TOTAL
Fruit.....	£340	-	£340
Grapes.....	49	£ 8	57
Bulls.....	13	15	28
Potatoes.....	12	-	12
Melons.....	11	-	11
Tomatoes.....	7	13	20
Totals.....	£432	£36	£468
Ômri's share	£216	£36	£252

*159 434 435 This income pattern is by no means standard from year to year. The 1956-57 season was a poor year, with potato prices to the farmer low, sulla yields below average and a glut of fruit. 1953, on the other hand, was the best of recent years and brought each of the two brothers an income of £310 on fruit alone. The 1956-57 season with its glut in fruit found a quantity greater than in 1953 bringing less return than in that year on the market. This uncertainty as to income between one year and the next is today more important to the arable farmer than to the herdsmen who can rely on the M.M.U.'s guaranteed price and can therefore estimate his income more accurately. [494] The arable, and, especially, the fruit-farmer

*159 241

for January planting at 3-4 cwt. per tomna. Seed from crop used for sowing in following autumn.

(4) - Manure.

- Mixed urban refuse and animal manure plowed in to 12-18 inches.
- One field of 2 tmien received 1 truck load refuse and 30 sacks dry manure.
- One field of 1.5 tmien received 50 sacks of animal manure from G's stock.
- Vines receive c. ½ cwt. artificial fertiliser per tomna almost every year.
- Wheat receives from ½ to 1 cwt. artificial fertiliser per tomna per year, broadcast with the seed.

H. General.

*159 [402] [423] [464] [178]

- Partnership has prevented excessive fragmentation of father's land.
- Free exchange of labour allows G to maintain a relatively large holding despite the inability of his young children to assist him. If these children wish to continue in farming, pressure on land will result.
- G therefore encourages his children in their education with a view to emigration and/or employment outside farming.

[435] [451] [461] [157]

- G has no real idea of costing of his production. Can give details of income and expenditure, but makes no allowance for enormous application of labour (see E) necessary for very modest income (see F).
- Willing to undertake still more labour (e.g. in spraying fruit trees) to avoid cash expenditure.
- All this despite the fact that G is well above average in intelligence and standard of education.
- Conservative in techniques and attitudes but eager to invest in proven successes (e.g. extension of vines and apple orchards, development of pig-farming). However, markets may already be glutted.
- With clear, patient, reasoned and disinterested advice and encouragement, G could probably much improve his methods and yields to make his holding a more profitable enterprise.

*159 423

CASE XI : Pietru (An arable farmer mainly concerned with irrigated produce.)

The nucleus of Pietru's farm is a block of 14 irrigable tmien on which he spends the greater part of his time. His home is about a mile away in the village and he also holds a large number of patches of dry (baghli) land scattered over the northern part of Malta. The more outlying of these dry fields have tended to be neglected, or left to Pietru's wife and family to work, while he has concentrated on building up and developing his irrigable holding. His father bought four of these irrigable tmien after the 1914-18 War although at that time the area was covered with concrete. This was laboriously removed and irrigation channels ('canali') installed. Other adjacent patches were acquired as they became available - Pietru himself acquiring the latest addition in 1954. He had taken over from his father some years previously although he had started his working life as a mason.

*159 241 464

Today Pietru, his son, wife and daughters cultivate the 14 tmien very intensively. The suggestion of a pathway is rejected because "it would take up too much irrigable land".

*159 432 435

February when prices start at c.9d a head rather than later in the year when they drop to c.4d a head.

(iv) A variety of other vegetable produce fruit and grapes are sold in small quantities.

(v) Stated cash income - £200 per annum. Regular income comes from arable products. Every two or three years sales of young heifers in calf bring in sizeable sums e.g. in 1958 one such Friesian heifer was sold for £170 and a 3 month old calf bought for £61.10.0.

G. Husbandry.

*159 241

(i) Land:

(a) Main concentration on maintaining high yields of vegetable crops on irrigated land, usually by heavy manuring rather than rotational farming. In 1956 - used all dung from own livestock.
- Purchased £100 worth of dung from an urban milk producer.
- Applied 25 bags sulphate of ammonia @ 25/- to 27/6d a bag.
- Collected several cartloads of mixed refuse from Government centre.

Dung applied directly to cucurbits, but mixed with refuse and sulphate of ammonia otherwise.

(b) On non-irrigated land crop sequence usually cereal, leguminous fodder, potatoes, except on poorest land where vetches alternate with barley.

[461] (c) Irrigation takes much of labour-time and water is applied empirically. A typical early potato crop will be watered 13 times, each watering by channel-and-bed control taking 1½ days.

[242] (d) Chemical treatment of the crops is accepted but not understood. Since 1953 Chloride of Lime and Copper Sulphate sprays have been used but the farmer is not at all sure of why they should help - the sprays are applied "when the potatoes show a blackness". This exemplifies a general attitude that certain pests and diseases can be treated with one or another of the "medicines" but considerable mystery surrounds the methods of application and the processes concerned.

(ii) Seeds:

Relies entirely on own plant strains except for potatoes. Is prepared periodically to buy Arran Banner seed-potatoes and in 1958 plucked up enough courage to try a new strain - Eigenheimer.

*159 23 (iii) Livestock:

Only interested in rearing heifers which are fed traditionally on a little grain, green fodder including "maxix", sulla, hay and beans.

H. General.

*159 241 433 435 [465] (i) An example of better kind of intensive market gardener. It is unlikely that without a complete re-organisation of his farming life any more irrigated land could be worked. At present casual labour costs of 15/- to 25/- a day, expansion of the labour force would be impossible. The only relatively simple economic improvement that could be made is the raising of quality standards and to a limited extent yields. In Malta there is no effective price differential between products of different quality, and the local market is very quickly saturated. This cultivator and others like him vaguely realise the predicament and pin their faith on minimum price guarantees, which in fact have little to do with the case.

*159 451 (ii) The farmers children keep rough accounts but only of the main items of disbursements and income. This is one of the few farmers who occasionally put a monetary value on his own labour. That of the family was taken for granted.

000

was taken for granted.

*159 (iii) Reasonably prepared to try new crops if they are proven
178 in his district. Not prepared to accept anything
242 technically as revolutionary as a wheelbarrow mainly on the ground that "it is not used here".

*159 CASE XII : Ċenzu (A cows' milk producer and village weighman.)

557 Ċenzu is an example of one type of part-time farmer in
241 Malta and Gozo in that his farm is the more important of the
234 two occupations for his livlihood. His work as licensed
[463] village weighman is important both because of the extra income which it brings and on account of the social standing which goes with the office. He is a shrewd and literate man who earlier in his life also engaged in importing and
[454] other business. He was one of the many farmers able to
[362] build up a substantial reserve as a result of the 1939-45
[727] War. The house is spacious and well-appointed by local standards and Ċenzu and his small family enjoy comfortable living conditions. His pre-War premises were damaged during the War and he received some £1800 official compensation to which he added a further £1200. This money was

*159 put towards the new house and towards the costs of building
234 up his present herd of 12 cows, a bull and 10 goats. The
434 milk produced and sold to the M.M.U. provides the basic
241 element of his income but he also grows cash crops for sale. In the 1956/57 winter a third of his crop area was devoted to fodder. This increased to 74% in the following winter but, given a substantial improvement in the prevailing prices for cash crops, it is likely that he would devote more space once again to these and buy in a larger part of the fodder
[432] needed. In 1957 he purchased over £1000 worth of fodder and received about £1350 for milk sold during the same period.

*159 Unlike most farmers he keeps detailed records of his
829 income and expenditure on the farm and animals and on the
474 weighing side of his business, but he remains unwilling to
[451] discuss his revenue with even apparently trusted outsiders. This reticence seems to relate to the traditional independent outlook of the farmer rather than to any anxiety to hide his accounts from a sense of guilt. He was prepared to join the Malta Milk Company (Il-Kumpanija Maltija tal-Halib) because he saw this as of some benefit to the milk producer in his relations with the M.M.U. authorities. But he has never been a member of a farmers' union and is clearly not interested in them although he thinks "A union might be a good idea". He shares the typical failure to appreciate the rôle of an efficient Union. Neither is he interested in joining a producers' Co-operative (Section 4).

000 As village-weighman he has a high social standing in the

F. Production and Sales.

*159 433 434 234 [292] (i) Cows milk sales range from December minimum of c.153 lbs. per day to April maximum of c.290 lbs. per day. Regards 3 gallon output per head a day as minimum profitable production. Milk receipts in 1957 c.£1350. (Costs of purchased fodder £1000).
- Goats milk sold for cheesemaking ('rikotta').
- About 20 gallons per annum of cows milk for cheese production.
- Practically no liquid milk drunk by family.

*159 24 [435] [433] (ii) Potatoes - Winter Crop - September to December.
-'Early' Crop - January to April.
Relies entirely on Agran Banner. Destination of crop depends on price e.g. Winter Crop 1956/57 sold at 25/- per qantar for export. Winter Crop 1957/58 sold at 27/- per qantar for local market.
- Usually produces c.50 qantar per annum and 4 or 5 used for domestic consumption.

[433] (iii) Onions produced for export and local market and for home consumption. Production fluctuates with climate - yields between extremes of 20 and 40 qantar per tomna.

(iv) - Small sales of vegetables - considerable range grown.
- Fodder production meets c.one-half requirements.

G. Husbandry.

(i) Land
(a) On best land typical sequence would be.

Sept.	(a)	Heavy manuring - 96 bags of dung and refuse per tomna.
Sept.-Dec.	(b)	Winter crop of potatoes.
Jan.	(c)	Artifical fertiliser - Sulphate of Ammonia 1 bag per tomna.
Jan.-April	(d)	Spring crop of potatoes.
May-Aug.	(e)	Summer fallow.
Sept.-April	(f)	Two crops of potatoes as (a) to (d).
May-Aug.	(g)	Onions - on watered land.
Sept.-May	(h)	Cultivation for and growing of wheat crop.
May-Aug.	(i)	Fallow.
Sept.-April	(j)	Sulla.

(b) More usual practice (which is not though of as a strict rotation) is local variation of four-year cycle.
- Manuring. Potatoes, Onions, Wheat, Sulla, Vetches and seed fodders such as Berfa and Binglin are introduced into this basic scheme.
(c) On fields near house domestic vegetable crops, e.g. garlic, brassicas, pumpkins, and marrows.

(ii) Seeds
- Mainly relies on own seed but periodically buys seed-potatoes for maintaining standard of 'early' crop.

*150 232 (iii) Livestock - Breeds cattle from own stock but prepared to experiment e.g. interested in artificial insemination.
- Feeding. Has a fair idea of fodder needs of livestock but uses traditional combination of green legumes, sulla hay, beans and concentrates without measurement. Has started purchasing ready-mixed balanced feed.

H. General.

*159 433 451 (i) An example of the best type of cows' milk producer. Keeps rough accounts of expenditure and receipts from most of sales but even so does not think in terms of profit-income and does not compute family labour in monetary terms at all.

(ii) Is tending towards specialising in cattle-breeding and is inclined to doubt the value of the arable sector. Is typical of most of his class in that he keeps no accounts of fodder-production on his own

*159 433 ●451 land but maintains that it is becoming uneconomic because of high labour costs and difficulty of raising yields any further.

(iii) Makes careful practical distinctions between types of land:

*159 134 241
- some fields have 8 inches of soil on rock platform and these can only be worked by hand.
- deeper soils up to 3 feet thick need periodic deep plowing although this may result in the bringing to the surface of "newba" (or "melh" - salt) - sub-surface saline concentration with harmful results.
- red and white soils have different characteristics for tillage and crop-growth.
- notes the presence of a thin, very hard weathered layer on top of Globigerina bed rock. This "skorfa tal-blat" is believed to prevent the movement of moisture from the rock water-table to overlying soil.

*159 157 626 (iv) In spite of literacy, general initiative and acumen he is conservative about trying new ideas. Here, as elsewhere, the chief obstacle appears to be social rather than economic - the fear of being different and the fear of failure in the eyes of the rest of the community.

*159 829 (v) In spite of (possibly because of) experience in check-weighing, is no more prepared to trust M.M.U. and official marketing agencies than any other farmer.

CASE XIII : Toni (A part-time arable farmer and caretaker of a military camp.)

*159 241 434 An example of part-time farming in which the field operations are the subsidiary part of the business - from the financial point of view though not as regards the amount of time spent on them.

His caretaking duties bring him some £5 per week for most of the year and yet leave him with enough free time to cultivate several irrigable patches near the camp. Now aged nearly seventy he works a much smaller total area than the thirty tmien of his younger days. He could in fact live on his income from his caretaking and continues to work the fields for four reasons:

(a) To provide food for his present family of three,
(b) To produce a supplementary income from the sale of cash crops,
(c) To occupy his time with the farming which he knows - as something of a hobby,
(d) To provide his emigrated sons each "with a piece of land" when they return to Malta for their retirement.

241 198 46 *[159] Items (b) and (c) reflect his independence of farming for the maintenance of himself and his wife and daughter, while (c) and (d) suggest that although farming ceases to be the countryman's livlihood he inclines to retain a residual interest in it even when he has been away from Malta for the greater part of his working life. This is a characteristic [369] feature of rural Malta and an important aspect of the recent increase in part-time farming. The 1957 Census of Agri- [162] culture lists 9,588 part-time as against 7,813 full-time farmers (R/164, p.20). The trend towards part- in place of full-time farming is significant in the present overall retreat from agriculture. It represents in many cases a

*159 [464] to find farm labourers even at 25 to 30/- a day.
- Occasional hired help at harvest time.

F. Production and Sales.

[434] - Main profit from tomatoes, grapes and potatoes. Subsidiary income from vegetables.
[433] - Attempts to space out production and sales by using
[251] many different varieties and storing, e.g. potatoes until prices are high.

G. Husbandry.

*159 20 43 (i) - Potatoes: three crops annually on best land.
- Artichokes: replanted every 4 years.
- Tomatoes: seed beds attached to irrigated plots carry many varieties.
- Melons: has experimented successfully with seed sent by relative in Canada.
- Cauliflowers: 4 crops between August and March, earliest sold before heads are formed.
(ii) - Manure brought from Luqa: 4 truckloads - £22 plus £8 for carriage will last one year. Also uses town refuse.
- Copper sulphate spray for potatoes, paraffin spray as weed killer.
(iii) - Has recently added to holding by reclamation of wasteland. Constructed a 2-tmion field, soil for which cost £150 (20 truckloads) and transport £50. This field returned £60 worth of potatoes in first year, £35 of tomatoes in the second. In autumn 1957 was preparing to repeat the process.
(iv) - Irrigated land rested under sulla every fourth year.

H. General.

*159 242 [463] [465] An unusually proficient part-timer cushioned by income from position as camp caretaker (£5.12.0 per week when camp not fully occupied). His job appears to leave him plenty of time to devote to his holding. He is willing to experiment and take risks, though experiments are concealed from his neighbours until proved successful. Has a lively appreciation of how to obtain best returns from his produce; very much au fait with market conditions.

*159 434 [451] Keeps fairly careful accounts and, according to his own statements, makes a profit of £250 p.a. from farming:

Receipts from produce	£450
Labour costs	£ 50
Seeds, manure, transport	£150
Profit	£250

Value of produce consumed by family £30.

[454] His two jobs have made him appreciably more prosperous than his neighbours. Without the subsidiary income from caretaking his financial position would be extremely precarious. As it is he is able to amass a considerable capital reserve.

*159 157 829 PART 2. Heavy Tractors and Maltese Farming.

CASE XIV : Ġanni (A young, progressive contract-plowman, with heavy tractors and other mechanized equipment.)

Ġanni is a bachelor in his late twenties. In most respects he is quite atypical of Maltese farmers today but his work and attitudes illustrate most vividly the economic, technical and social problems facing agriculture and the rural community in Malta.

His youth, his knowledge of written and spoken English, his first hand acquaintance with Australia, the United Kingdome, Italy and other countries, his belief in mechanization as the way to make money in Maltese farming, his social